

Business and Financial Outlook For 1944

By Roger W. Babson

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BABSON PARK, Mass., Dec. 29.—Most firms are booked to capacity. If any more business were offered they would not be able to handle it for many months. This is roughly my forecast for 1944. The Babson chart index of the Physical Volume of Business for the final quarter of 1943 averaged 141 compared with 150.7 for the same period of 1942. The all-time high was reached in December 1942 when my index stood at 155.6. It is not possible that this record can be exceeded in 1944.



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Commodity Prices
War developments will influence commodity prices during 1944. The collapse of Germany could result in a sharp, though temporary, reaction in leading wholesale indexes. If the going in Italy or elsewhere should prove unexpectedly hard—indicating a longer war—prices should firm. Cattle and hogs may bring lower average prices. Soybean and corn prices face the test of large marketings. They will do well to hold. Increased imports of coffee, cocoa and sugar will hold down their prices.

Continued heavy demand is indicated for most industrial com-

Mod. Mich.; Jackson, Mich.; Knoxville, Tenn.; Phoenix, Ariz.; Portland, Ore.; San Diego, Calif.; Savannah, Ga.; Springfield, Mass.; Topeka, Kan., and Wichita, Kan. It will make a difference in 1944 business whether Germany cracks in the early or latter part of the year. When this happens Washington will begin at once to cancel war orders, especially on the Atlantic seaboard. The Army will accept no more orders, may begin orderly demobilization. Navy men may be in for two or three years more. Army demobilization may start around election time in 1944. This should help retail trade.

Industries Differ
Expansion of airplane factories has been practically completed. Automotive industry during 1944 will gradually reconvert to normal. New car stockpile low. Look for relief only on trucks. The chemical industry has enjoyed great expansion. This may continue. Leaders in new drugs should prosper. Heavy chemicals may not show any gain over 1943 volume. Building about the same level for total new building as in 1943. Relating restrictions on private construction will be in the near future. Gains in 1944 will show in this category when compared with 1943. An optimistic on postwar home building. The shoe and clothing industries are beset by price ceilings and increased costs. These will continue through 1944. Woolen

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THUMBNAILED OUTLOOK FOR 1944

1. GENERAL: Year 1944 should be divided into two parts: (a) From January 1st to date of Germany's collapse; and (b) from said date to December 31st.
2. PRODUCTION: Babsonchart Index will average around 130, about 12% below 1943.
3. COMMODITIES: Strength in various commodities should be followed by renewed weakness.
4. SALES: Retail sales dollar volume will average higher for entire year, but physical volume will be down 10%.
5. LABOR: Pressure for higher wage rates will continue throughout the year with more labor troubles and more wage increases than in 1943.
6. STOCKS: If the market is low when Germany cracks it will then go up; but if then high, it will go down.
7. BONDS: Good and medium-grade bonds will hold close to present levels throughout the year.

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Patriotic Hall Proposal Will Be Submitted to Voters April 11

The proposal to place the proposition before the voters of Torrance at the April 11 municipal election for construction of a two-story, with basement, Patriotic Hall structure as a post-war project, is now assured, according to Jack Hallanger, commander of the American Legion Post in Torrance.

Free Tuberculin Tests at H.S. Here Next Week

The tuberculosis case finding program has been brought to the Torrance high school, according to announcement today by Harold E. Perry, principal. On Monday and Friday of next week, Mr. Perry advised, tuberculin tests will be made at the school.

"About one out of five students in Los Angeles high schools and colleges have the germs of tuberculosis in their bodies. A few have the disease, and all of these students look and feel healthy and do not know the germs are in their bodies," Mr. Perry advises.

"To find out whether the germs of tuberculosis have entered the body, all young people, including every student in our school, should have a tuberculin test. This is a simple, harmless skin test.

"If the test shows the presence of the germs, only the X-ray can reveal whether they have done any damage. X-ray service will be provided in the school when needed, and the tuberculosis specialist's findings will be explained at a private conference," Principal Perry said. The student may have a free tuberculin test, if the questionnaire provided is properly filled out and signed by the parent or guardian of the applicant. All students are urged to take this test if he has any suspicion of existence of the germ. Much depends on their future health by taking the test, the principal warned.

Monday Morning Blaze at General Petroleum Plant

The Torrance fire department was called to the General Petroleum refinery plant at 1:15 a.m., Monday morning where some fumes from a tank became ignited. The flames spread to several sump holes and to a concrete oil pit near the new high octane gasoline unit now under construction which for a time was endangered by the blaze.

Chief John E. McMaster said the company's own department equipped to use foam in subduing fires of this character performed excellent service. He said the loss was negligible.

Torrance R. C. In Santa Role For Soldiers

Mrs. Lola Hoover, chairman of the Christmas gifts committee of Torrance Chapter of the American Red Cross, reports that 155 packages were delivered to the 13th Army Ordnance camp, 136 to the 147th st. Army camp and 121 to the Army Station hospital on Carson st.

Mrs. Hoover expressed, through The Herald, her thanks and appreciation to various organizations and individuals who made the gift campaign for soldiers possible.

Among the donors were: Police department, postoffice, Assembly of God church, Rotary club, Evangelical church, Eastern Star, National Business & Professional Woman's club, girls from Lomita 5 and 10 cent store, Legion Auxiliary, Kiwanis club, Four Square church, Torrance Woman's club, Ladies of the Moose, Catholic church, Christian church, Girl Scout, Troop No. 2, First Lutheran church, Methodist church, Nazarene church, Baptist church, National Home Appliance Co., Columbia Acacia club, Junior Woman's club.

The morale at 13th Army Ordnance camp was heightened last Thursday by a beautifully decorated Yule tree, the handwork of Mrs. Lola Hoover, branch chairman, American Red Cross, her husband, Ray Hoover, Mrs. M. J. Beale, staff assistance chairman and Mrs. Aniel Miles, camp service chairman. At the conclusion of their work the group enjoyed coffee and other refreshments served by the service men.

Monoxide Death Averted by Call For Police Aid

When John Jahnsen went to his single room at 1908 1/2 Martin ave., Torrance, on Christmas night he left a gas heater burning to keep off the chill, but neglected to open the windows to give ventilation. Efforts to arouse him the next morning resulted in a call to the police.

Officers responded and, on forcing the door open, found the occupant lying on a bed unconscious and frothing at the mouth. The windows were opened to let in fresh air and the Stone & Myers ambulance called. He was conveyed to the Torrance Memorial hospital where he was revived by oxygen treatment.

When Jahnsen regained consciousness he agreed that he was near the brink of monoxide poisoning and that the timely arrival of the police had saved his life.

Mary E. McKinley Receives Final Call at Age 67

One of the pioneer and popular residents of Torrance, Mary Ellen McKinley, was called by death last Thursday, Dec. 23, at the age of 67 years, ten months and 21 days. Her home was at 1417 Cota ave.

The deceased had been a resident of this community for 27 years during which time she took an active part in social and fraternal circles and enjoyed hosts of friends. She was a member of the Christian church of Torrance, of the Order of the Eastern Star and Royal Neighbors. Mrs. McKinley until recently conducted what was known as the McKinley Inn at the Cota ave. address.

Mrs. McKinley was born Feb. 2, 1876 at New Richmond, W. Va., and is survived by one son, Forest W. McKinley, his wife and daughter, two sisters, Mrs. W. F. Bowen, Los Angeles, and Mrs. Julia Huddleston, Huntington, W. Va.; also by a cousin, Mrs. Ida Callahan, Los Angeles.

Veteran Group Delivers Gifts To Hospital

A committee representing the Torrance Post of Veterans of Foreign Wars and Auxiliary visited the U.S. Army Station hospital on Carson st. last Thursday where they left many Christmas packages which were turned over to Red Cross nurses to be distributed to the proper places.

Among the packages were 47 cartons of cigarettes, 11 games, home-made cookies and candy, chewing gum and candy bars, and other articles including books and magazines.

Thrifty Builders to Grade Street Area

For a consideration of \$600 the city council Tuesday evening approved an agreement with Thrifty Builders, Inc. to grade Greenwood, Hickory, Sonoma and Eldorado aves. which surround the Thrifty concern's housing project now in course of construction.

Surfacing of the streets will follow under direction of the Torrance city engineer's department.

Prizes Awarded at Recreation Center

Results of a contest for children of the Recreation Center were announced this week by Mrs. C. C. Bohrer, director.

Members of the Torrance Kiwanis Club judged the display and will award prizes to the winners who will also be entertained as guests of the club at its regular meeting, Monday evening, Jan. 3.

Three Dead, Two Hurt In Train, Auto Crash

Three persons are dead, two others seriously injured—all reported to be employees of the U. S. Rubber Reserves Corp. on Vermont ave., just east of Torrance—was the result of a P. E. train-auto crash at 4:15 p. m. Tuesday at Normandie ave. and 182nd st.

The dead are: David M. Fletcher, 47, driver of the car, 903 5th st., Hermosa Beach, killed instantly.

Gene Herbert Boren, 19, 1412 1/2 Manhattan ave., Manhattan Beach.

Thomas E. Williams, 26 1/2 Palm Drive, Hermosa Beach.

The last two named died in an L. A. police ambulance en route to the Georgia Street Receiving hospital.

The injured: James Reynolds, 23, 1608-Z Strand, Hermosa Beach. Arthur McMurtry, 19, 1653 Bay View ave., Hermosa Beach.

According to late reports from L. A. police, the condition of the last two was said to be extremely serious.

The train motorman, W. Colley, informed the police that the automobile hesitated momentarily at the crossing and then suddenly shot ahead in front of the train. The P. E. train consisted of an express car en route to L. A. which left Torrance around 4 p. m. Fletcher and his companions were headed west at the time of the accident, apparently returning to their homes from the rubber plant where they had completed their day shift.

Motorman Colley stated that when the express car struck the auto, the air brake hose was broken, which necessitated using the emergency brakes. Because of this the smashed auto was pushed down the track a considerable distance before the train was brought to a stop.

Fishing Licenses For 1944 on Sale

Angling licenses for 1944 are now on sale at the offices of the State Division of Fish and Game, and sporting goods stores.

The new angling license books differ somewhat from the previous ones. There is only one stub and license to the page. All information is now filled out on the stub, taking the place of the application formerly used.

An angling license is required by all those over the age of 18 years, excepting members of the armed forces who are also exempt, for the taking of game fish. The cost of a citizen's license is \$2.

Gardena Man Dies of Alcoholic Poisoning

Dale Beinsen, 2808 157th st., Gardena, died at the General hospital in Los Angeles last Sunday where it was reported that his ailment was due to alcoholic poisoning. It was asserted that he had obtained some liquor and imbibed it in a Torrance cafe. Soon afterward he became ill and was rushed to the General hospital where he succumbed.

Torrance police have no record of the case, no report having been filed at headquarters.

Rain Hikes Season Total to 5.45 In.

The rainstorm of Tuesday forenoon, continuing thru Tuesday night and early Wednesday morning, brought added precipitation to the Torrance and Lomita areas of .68 of an inch, bringing the season's total to 5.45 inches, compared with 2.95 inches at this time a year ago.

Merchants Express Opinions On Trade Conditions In 1944

What is there in prospect for us in Torrance during 1944? This question was asked of a group of local business and professional men today. Their opinions regarding the supply of merchandise, prices, public transportation and automobile problems, savings, as well as future course of the war are given below:

HILLMAN LEE, manager of J. C. Penney Co. store: "Speaking of merchandise, there will be some articles more plentiful, others scarcer during 1944. Rayon, hosiery, lingerie, curtains and draperies will be harder to get next year and there is every indication that work clothes will be included in this category. The situation looks encouraging for good clothing. Plastic soles for shoes are coming in to replace leather, because manufacturers of shoes are finding leather more and more difficult to obtain.

"When will the war be over?" To this question he replied: "I wish I knew." But, he added, "it seems reasonable to predict that the Nazis will be whipped and out of the war by the middle of next year. Then the United Nations can turn their combined attention to the Japs. While the war situation looks good, we must not let ourselves believe it is about over. We can expect large casualties during the next few months of fighting. There is no easy road to victory just ahead. Meanwhile we must keep our fighting forces supplied with every thing they need to bring the enemy to his knees."

SAM LEVY of the Levy Department store says: "Due to the large amount of merchandise sold during the Christmas season and the fact that whole salers' shelves have been practically empty for four months retailers will have to await deliveries from manufacturers for replenishing their stocks. This shortage applies to all lines, and it will probably take at least three months for manufacturers to make and deliver goods.

"Manufacturers will be required to channel their production along the lines where the most acute shortage exists. Prices will remain unchanged. In some lines of merchandise goods are already being shipped with O.P.A. prices attached and I look for this practice to be expanded, especially on articles which manufacturers will be forced to make.

"As far as our own store is concerned, we are still able to deliver merchandise of very nearly every description due to our large reserve stock. We base this conviction on the remarks of our customers who having shopped without success in larger cities, have come to our store and found the goods they sought."

DEAN L. SEARS, manager of the Torrance branch of the Bank of America, predicts that "if merchants can get merchandise there is no question of an increase in retail sales during the coming year. I anticipate increased deposits in both commercial and savings accounts, as well as War Bond purchases as long as the need exists for backing the war effort." Sears states:

"Our war bond sales for Christmas have exceeded the volume of purchases during recent Bond drives, which certainly indicates the high regard people have for the security of War Bonds," Post commented.

CITY ATTORNEY JOHN F. MCALL, who has just returned from Chicago and New Orleans reports that everywhere he went throughout the South and Mid West people were expecting a very prosperous year ahead.

"The most encouraging feature I found was an increasing interest in post-war planning," McCall states.

R. K. DAGGETT, manager of Flinstone Stores in Torrance, felt that the people were not taking the gasoline shortage seriously enough and that it was possible additional limitations would be placed on the service stations and motorists soon.

"But," he said, "it will be to the credit of the American motorist that he saved our tire situation, rather than to any one individual on the rubber industry itself. It is because he took care of his tires, drove slowly that automobiles are running today and will continue to run during 1944.

"I don't expect many more new tires during 1944, but we will get plenty of rubber for retreads of better quality that will give excellent mileage and adhere to the tire. We will win the rubber battle in 1944 by continued care of the tires we have today."

B. C. BUXTON, Torrance realtor, ventures the prediction that "Hitler's forces will be beaten before next July. He bases this conclusion not so much on weapons as upon food. Hitler has stripped the conquered countries until there is nothing more left to grab. He has lost the Ukraine, the bread basket of Russia and the Russians have driven his armies almost out of their country entirely. It will be a long time before the Germans can produce food to sustain their army or civilian population," the realtor said.

Buxton expressed the view that priorities on building material will be relaxed, if not entirely removed this year. Grounds for this belief is that the government is about through with war plant construction, and the war housing situation is being taken care of. With the letting up in plant construction, material and labor will be released to private enterprise. "I am of the opinion that construction of better buildings will then follow and I believe the demand for them will prevail," Buxton declared.

Torrance, in the opinion of Buxton, occupies a very enviable position to meet the problems of the post-war era. The plants built here are essential not only in war, but also in peace time. We should continue to be a prosperous community after the war is ended. Unlike most industrial towns, Torrance has become a home-owner community, which means stability. When people own their own homes, naturally they are interested in their home community and its welfare, is Buxton's view.

ARNOLD BUSINICK, manager of the grocery department of the Ideal Ranch Market, when asked about the food situation in 1944, said: "According to all reports there will be less and less canned goods. People will have to use more and more fresh vegetables and fruits and put up things in their own homes. This does not mean for anyone to get panicky, there will be food for all, certainly so if we do not hoard. It is best to buy each year actual needs for that particular week."

JAKE TISCARENO of Tiscareno Bros., operators of the meat department of the Ideal Market reported on the meat outlook for 1944 as follows: "It looks today as if it will be necessary for the government to reduce the meat allowance per person from 12 to 11 pounds each month. This will be done by increasing the point value of various cuts of meat. However, see nothing in the picture now or 1944 to really worry about, here should be enough meat in limited amounts for everyone."

HARRY ABRAMSON of the National Home Appliance Co., said that his firm would make no attempt to fill merchandise gaps with cheap imitations of real articles.

"I do not feel," he said, "that it is wise for anyone to buy such junk. It is far better to buy used merchandise in good condition. However, it looks at present, as if the vital needs of our Army and Navy are being supplied, that many items necessary to the home economy will be manufactured according to pre-war standards. The year 1944 will be the tough merchant

Gardena Seeks Bus Line Route Into Torrance

A petition was filed with the Gardena city council last week urging extension of the Gardena municipal bus system to Torrance. The petition recites that the proposed bus line would give transportation service to Torrance and Long Beach. The route suggested is from Gardena via the aluminum plant to Western ave., continuing on thru Torrance and Lomita and emerging on Highway 101, to make connection with the Long Beach service.

This bus service is considered quite necessary, petitioners claimed, for many reasons. One that the mothers of pre-school children need to take their children to the clinic located in Torrance, and with the shortage of doctors the need for this local care is urgent. Most mothers are unable to secure transportation of any kind to Torrance. Workers of the aluminum plants will also be able to secure definite transportation to and from work with the proposed bus line, petitioners urged.

Subdivision Owner Invited Before Council

William Warfield, proponent of residential tract near Hawthorne Blvd., has been requested to file with, and appear before, the city council early in January with maps showing his improvement plans and location of proposed water distribution lines. Warfield recently sought permission to install his own water system for the subdivision to be supplied by wells. Action has been withheld until the subdivider appears before the council.

WAR HOUSING PROJECT

Announcement was made recently that 143 new homes are to be built in the Gardena Park tract to help relieve the serious housing shortage. Construction will start at once on 35 of the homes, for which priorities have already been granted. Priorities for the other 108 are now being processed and construction on these is expected to start about Jan. 1, according to G. J. Potts who is the engineer in charge of construction.

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